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THE

MYSORE REVERSION,

"AN EXCEPTIONAL CASE".

"Machiavel's errors arose not in consulting the principle of utility, but in making false applications of it. Bad faith is always bad policy."

JEREMY BENTHAM.

"I consider that, in fact, our Government is at the head of a system composed of native States, and I would avoid what are called rightful occasions of appropriating those territories. On the contrary, I should be disposed, as far as I could, to maintain the native States, and I am satisfied that their maintenance, and the giving to the subjects of those States the conviction that they are considered permanent parts of the general Government of India, would naturally strengthen our authority."

LORD ELLENBOROUGH, 1853.

"The House may dismiss at once all question of the annexation of territory. There are many reasons why I think we should not annex Native States. It is for our advantages that such States should be left in India."

SIR CHARLES WOOD, now LORD HALIFAX, in the House of Commons, 26th Feb., 1863.

"Thirty years ago the predominant idea with many English statesmen was that our interest in India consisted in extending our territory to the largest possible extent. To that annexation policy the terrible disaster of the mutiny of 1857 must to a large extent be ascribed. But as time has gone on, that desire of increased dominion which is the natural temptation of all powerful States has been overcome, and Statesmen of all parties have arrived at the conclusion that we now hold in India pretty well as much as we can govern, and that we should be pursuing an unwise and dangerous policy if we tried to extend our borders or to lessen the power or the permanence of those native rulers upon whose assistance we have so long relied. I believe the native Princes were formerly the objects of jealousy and distrust to English rulers, but within the last ten years a great change has come over the spirit of our statesmanship in that respect; and there is now, I think, a general desire to uphold them in the rights and honours which they justly earned by their loyal support at the time of the mutiny, and to look upon them not as impediments to our rule, but as its most useful auxiliaries."

LORD CRANBORNE, at Stamford, July 12, 1866.

provisional charge of the Viceregal office, and the letter of the 31st December, 1863, communicating the refusal of the Home Government to replace the Rajah at the head of his own administration, was obviously signed by him as a simple matter of routine. He could not have avoided explaining the Secretary of State's decision. The more important question of maintaining or destroying the State of Mysore arose at a later date, and did not demand the consideration either of Lord Elgin or of Sir William Denison.

Whatever may have been the views expressed by Sir John Lawrence since he returned to the latitude of Calcutta, he is understood to have been favourably disposed towards the Rajah, when he was a member of the Council in the more pure and free atmosphere of London. I think I have succeeded in proving in the succeeding pages that his altered opinions are not the result of a more careful scrutiny of the facts, or of a deeper consideration of causes and consequences.

The mass of Viceregal authority is thus reduced after our analysis to that of Lord Dalhousie and his most distinguished Lieutenant; and the annexation of Mysore is seen to be a mere return to that policy which has shaken throughout Asia the belief in British honour, and which has been denounced, more or less plainly, by every leading statesman of Great Britain.

But let us turn to the other side, and read the list of those who are known to have supported, and who now recommend, the policy of good faith, restitution and solid reform. Lord William Bentinck, who, under the influence of exaggerated reports, assumed the management of Mysore, regretted the hasty step he had taken, and proposed the Rajah's restoration to the head of a more limited Government. His two immediate successors, Lord Metcalfe and Lord Auckland, concurred in the advisability of restoring